Spotlight

MICHIGAN Department of Education

on Student Assessment and Accountability

What's New
February 12, 2015

Quick Links ... take you directly to articles

- **Recorded Session of Student Supports Webinar now Available**
- **Grade/Subject Sample Online Test Items Available Week of February 16th**
- **NEW! Spring 2015 M-STEP Training Video** 🖥
- **1% MI-Access Proficiency Cap Waiver Applications Available Late Winter**
- **NEW! Calculator Practice Online Tools Training** 🖥
- **MSDS Trouble-Free Accountability Reporting Guide Now Available**
- **Not Tested Exception in ELA for Students in U.S. for 12 Months or Less**

Important Dates and Reminders

Recently Asked Questions

🖥 The computer icon highlights Spotlight articles that contain information tech coordinators also need to know.

Update! The Recorded Session (and accompanying PowerPoint) of the M-STEP, MI-Access, and WIDA Student Supports Webinar is Now Available!

If you weren't able to register for, or attend any, of the February or March webinars, or would like to use the materials provided in the webinars for staff training sessions, you will now be able to access the recorded session. The M-STEP, MI-Access, and WIDA Student Supports webinar are available on the M-STEP www.mi.gov/mstep and MI-Access www.mi.gov/mi-access pages. The accompanying PowerPoint is also available.

If you have questions after viewing the PowerPoint, recorded webinar, and other documentation available on this topic, please submit them at any time to baa@michigan.gov with the phrase "Supports and Accommodations questions" in the subject line.

Grade/Subject Sample Online Test Items Available Week of February 16th

The Office of Standards and Assessment (OSA) will be posting another resource targeted at students taking online M-STEP assessments in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. New Sample Item Sets in ELA and mathematics are being developed for students in grades 3 – 8 and 11.

The Sample Item Sets are intended to provide students and teachers with sample test items that demonstrate the rigor of Michigan's academic content standards in mathematics and ELA.

The Sample Item Sets will be embedded in Michigan's online delivery engine so students and teachers can practice using its navigation tools and features, become familiar with the technology-enhanced

► *Sign up for Spotlight at:* https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/MIMDE/subscriber/new. Enter your email address and select Spotlight under Student Assessment.

Have Other Questions?

For assessment questions, please email BAA@michigan.gov.

For accountability questions, please email MDE-Accountability@michigan.gov.

For phone assistance with assessment or accountability issues, call 877-560-8378 and select the appropriate menu option.

items they are likely to experience in the spring, and practice ELA and mathematics test items at their grade level. This new resource differs from the Spring 2015 Preview by providing more sample test items specific to grade and content.

The Sample Item Sets are grade-specific, content-specific, and will be released on a rolling schedule that mirrors the staggered testing windows. The first phase of Sample Item Sets released will be for grades 5, 8, and 11, and will consist of one third of the total number of sample items OSA will be posting. As additional items and grades become available, OSA will communicate this information in the Spotlight.

The following Sample Item Sets will be released the week of February 16, 2015:

- Grade 5 ELA   17 sample items
- Grade 5 Mathematics   11 sample items
- Grade 8 ELA   17 sample items
- Grade 8 Mathematics   6 sample items
- Grade 11 ELA   15 sample items
- Grade 11 Mathematics   7 sample items

The Sample Item Sets may be accessed through Google Chrome at https://wbte.drcedirect.com/MI/portals/mi/.

NEW! Spring 2015 M-STEP Training Videos

The Division of Accountability Services (DAS) is pleased to announce a series of training videos for Spring 2015 assessments, available on the DRC eDIRECT site, beginning on February 25, 2015.

These videos will be of particular interest to Technology Coordinators, Building Coordinators, and any other school staff involved with test administration for M-STEP and MI-Access. The information featured in these videos include how to access documents in eDIRECT; how to configure the INSIGHT software; how to access the Online Tools Trainings; how to add, edit, and mass-assign accommodations; and much more!

The document with the complete list of videos and dates when they become available, can be found at http://www.mi.gov/documents/mde/M-STEP_Training_Videos_481357_7.pdf

Important updates on M-STEP and MI-Access documents and training videos will be announced in future Spotlights as they are released.

1% MI-Access Proficiency Cap Waiver Applications Available Late Winter

It is anticipated that the 1% MI-Access Proficiency Cap Waiver Applications for the 2014-15 Scorecards will be available in late winter (March/April). Applications will be completely electronic and will be available through the Secure Site. Information about the 1% cap and the waiver application process can be found at this link: http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/MI-Access_Cap_Exception_Information_459065_7.ppt.

NEW! Calculator Practice Online Tools Training

A new Calculator Practice page is now available on the M-Step Online Tools Training link that can be accessed through Google Chrome at https://wbte.drcedirect.com/MI/portals/mi/.

MSDS Best Practices: Michigan Student Data System (MSDS) Reporting Guide for Trouble-Free Accountability Data NOW AVAILABLE!

To help districts and schools understand how data submitted in the Michigan Student Data System (MSDS) impacts accountability calculations (e.g., Scorecards, Top-to-Bottom School Rankings), a new resource guide updated to reflect spring testing, "Best Practices: Michigan Student Data System (MSDS)

Reporting Guide for Trouble-Free Accountability Data" is now available at: http://www.mi.gov/baa.

This guide can be used to help district and school pupil accountants and assessment coordinators understand how, and from where, their student data is used for accountability purposes, with a focus on accurate MSDS reporting of:

*   Student demographics (including grade level)
*   Enrollment/exit dates
*   Instructional entity/program

The direct link to the PDF version of this helpful guide can be found at: http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/MSDS_Best_Practices_400576_7.pdf.

Not Tested Exemption in M-STEP and MI-Access English-Language Arts (ELA) for Students in US for 12 Months or Less

Previously, there was an exemption for students that have been in the United States for 12 months or less to not test students in grades 3-8 in the reading and writing content areas.

This message seeks to clarify that the 12 month ELA (reading/writing) exemption is not impacted by the change to spring assessments or the change to the definition of Full Academic Year (FAY) status.

For the 2014-15 school year and moving forward, schools can continue to be able to not test students in ELA that have been in the US for 12 months or less, provided they take the WIDA ACCESS or WIDA Alternate ACCESS and were not enrolled during a prior year's state summative assessment window.

The exemption only applies to the M-STEP/MI-Access ELA content area assessment. Students are still required to take the state assessments offered in other content areas.

Federal guidance does not require the 12 months to be consecutive so the MDE allows for a cumulative 12 months. This is done by looking at MSDS historical enrollment/exit records. However, this is a secondary consideration as the primary determinant for whether or not the exemption can apply is by examining whether or not the student was enrolled during a prior year's state summative assessment window. If they were here for a previous core content area assessment, left the country, and have come back still in their initial 12 cumulative months, MDE cannot approve the exemption.

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Important Dates and Reminders
Upcoming important dates, recent topics, etc.

Approaching Deadlines!

- **February 2 – 18, 2015 at 5:00 PM:** Initial Material Orders for M-STEP and MI-Access grades 3–8 and High School is now available on the Secure Site. (See page 1 for more information.)

- **NOW – February 18, 2015:** **M-STEP and MI-Access** grades 3–8 and high school Pre-ID to receive printed barcodes.

Important Dates

February 2015

- 🖥 **NOW – February 20, 2015:** Action steps to prepare for the Spring 2015 Transition Readiness are located in both word and PDF formats here:
  - Spring 2015 M-STEP Transition Readiness Timeline WORD
  - Spring 2015 M-STEP Transition Readiness Timeline PDF

- **February 2 – March 2, 2015:** Window for schools to:
  - Conduct supervised ACT pre-test sessions.
  - Conduct ACT room supervisor and proctor training.
  - Arrange to meet ACT testing requirements at school or off-site location.

- **February 9 – March 27, 2015**: **WIDA ACCESS** and WIDA Alternate ACCESS for ELLs testing window. Please refer to the Spring 2014–15 WIDA Schedule for more information about important WIDA ACCESS testing dates.

- **February 23 – 27, 2015:** **ACT** Test Coordinator receives secure standard time and accommodations materials.

March 2015

- **March 3, 2015:** Day 1 **ACT Plus Writing** Initial Test Date.

- **March 4, 2015:** Day 2 **WorkKeys** Initial Test Date.

- **March 3 – 17, 2015:** Day 1 **ACT** Plus Writing Accommodations Test Window.

- **March 4 – 18, 2015:** Day 2 **WorkKeys** Accommodations Test Window.

- **March 16 – April 15, 2015:** Anticipated date that the 1% MI-Access Proficiency Cap Waiver Applications will first become available in the Secure Site.

- **March 17, 2015:** **ACT** Plus Writing Makeup Test Date.

- **March 18, 2015:** **WorkKeys** Makeup Test Date.

- **March 18, 2015: MSDS Spring 2015 General Collection** submission deadline.

- **March 25, 2015: MSDS** Spring 2015 General Collection certification deadline.

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Articles in Recent Spotlights

To access the following *What's New* articles from our recent Spotlight editions, go to http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,4615,7-140-22709_31168-280911--,00.html.

February 5th Edition

- Initial Materials Orders - Now Open, page 1.

- Registration is now open for the DRC Technology Coordinator Training for the Michigan Online Spring 2015 Assessments, page 2.

February 9th Edition

- Important M-STEP Update, page 1.

- Availability for March 4, 2015 M-STEP Spring 2015 Student Supports and Accommodations Webinars, page 2.

- M-STEP Spanish Mathematics Translation Clarification, page 2.

- Designated Supports Clarification, page 3.

- iPad Spring 2015 M-STEP assessment keyboard update, page 3.

Recently Asked Questions

I'm a fifth grade teacher, and my students are using the Spring 2015 Preview to get familiar with testing online. Some of the math items that are in the Spring 2015 Preview show a "Practice Hint". Are there going to be practice hints on the actual online test this spring?

No, the practice hints are only provided in sample items to explain to students how that particular technology-enhanced item functions. Practice hints will not be available in the actual test given this spring.

Designated supports – where/who/how do they have to be designated?

Designated Supports can be identified by educators who know the students' abilities and daily instructional use habits of the supports in question. Although the new concept of Michigan's accessibility framework is to increase flexibility, a school's decision to use Designated Supports must be made at an individual student level.

A defining feature of Designated Supports is to allow students who are not necessarily formally identified as English learners (EL) or as a student with a disability (with an IEP or 504) to use a support that meets their specific needs in accessing test content. For example, a struggling reader who is receiving intensive interventions as a part of a school's multi-tiered system of support may need text read aloud and could thus have the text-to-speech option turned on for English language arts questions. Designated Supports are not intended to be utilized as Universal Tools.

A common misconception is that providing students with as many supports as possible during the test will increase their scores. However, research shows that providing unnecessary supports may actually cause significant levels of distraction which have negative impacts on performance.

When considering Designated Supports, educators should ask themselves these questions:

1. Does providing this support meet a specific need for the student?

2. Does the student use this type of support on a regular basis in the classroom?

3. Is the need for the support identified as a need on the student's IEP or Section 504 plan? (If not, it does not necessarily mean that the support cannot be used.)

4. Does the support help level the playing field to access the information presented for the student? (It is not designed to offer an advantage.)

Designated supports will need to be turned 'On' before generating a student's test ticket. Those online embedded designated supports needing to be turned 'On' are identified in the Supports and Accommodations Table in the mode column designated with the letter E. Some designated supports for paper/pencil test takers need to be identified on the student answer document.

Will enlarged print be available this year?

Yes, enlarged print as a paper/pencil option is available for all M-STEP and MI-Access assessments. A magnifier is also a Universal Tool for students taking the online assessments.

Recently Asked Questions

Why is MI-Access FI-ELA: Expressing Ideas not online?

The decision was made to continue our Expressing Ideas assessment as a paper/pencil assessment for the following reasons:

- The rubrics used to score this assessment allow for written responses, drawn responses or a combination of both. This is very difficult to translate to an online environment.

- We do not have data to support a change to an online environment that requires keyboarding for this population. It is possible this could change, after some research on the subject, but the decision was to keep this component of the assessment consistent for this year.

Please note: Students that require their MI-Access FI Accessing Print responses to be completed by a scribe, may still do so using the Scribe guidelines. In addition, students may use a word processor to complete their response to the prompt, if required by their IEP. The assessment administrator would need to follow special packaging instructions when this is the case. Neither the scribe nor the word processing procedures represent a change for this year, so procedures used in the past in these cases would still hold true.

► *Prior Recently Asked Questions can be found at* http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Recently_Asked_Questions_470957_7.pdf.